

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15

AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00

XMB-04 OPIC-06 SP-02 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

/091 W

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R 100610Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5021

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL PERTH

AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

UNCLAS CANBERRA 0911

GENEVA FOR MTN DELEGATION

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, EGEN, ELAB, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN UNEMPLOYMENT PASSES FIVE PERCENT

1. SUMMARY: AUSTRALIAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 5.2 PERCENT (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED) IN JANUARY, UP FROM 4.09 PERCENT FOR PREVIOUS MONTH. FAINT ENCOURAGEMENT NOTED, HOWEVER, IN FACTS THAT REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED (A) INCREASED LESS IN JANUARY (16.7 PCT.) THAN IN DECEMBER (39.8 PCT.), AND (B) DECREASED marginally ON SEASONALLY ADJUSTED BASIS. NONETHELESS FIGURES PROMPTED A CALL FROM MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND LABOR CLYDE CAMERON TO AUSTRALIAN WORKERS

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TO MODERATE WAGE CLAIMS OR "RISK IMPERILING JOBS OF MANY

THOUSANDS." END SUMMARY.

2. FIGURES RELEASED SATURDAY EVENING, FEB. 8, ONE DAY AHEAD OF SCHEDULE (WHICH OPPOSITION PROMPTLY ASSERTED AIMED TO MINIMIZE NATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE AS MOST NATIONAL DAILIES DO NOT PUBLISH ON SUNDAY) SHOW TOTAL UNEMPLOYED AT 311,596 OR 5.2 PCT. OF WORKFORCE, OF 5.9 MILLION. WHILE THIS IS 44,598 INCREASE OVER PERVIOUS MONTH IT REPRESENTS SUBSTANTIAL DECLINE IN RATE OF INCREASE IN NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED FROM DECEMBER'S RECORD FIGURE. IN ADDITION, SEASONALLY ADJUSTED FIGURE OF 240,153 IS A SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT OVER PREVIOUS MONTH'S 240,804.

3. ALTHOUGH THESE DATA SHOW DETERIORATION OF AUSTRALIAN EMPLOYMENT SITUATION MAY HAVE BEGUN TO DECELERATE, GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SLOW TO MAKE MUCH OF THIS POINT. IN FACT MINISTER FOR LABOR AND IMMIGRATION CAMERON USED OCCASION OF RELEASE OF FIGURES TO ADMONISH WAGE EARNERS TO MODERATE WAGE CLAIMS SO AS NOT TO FURTHER "SQUEEZE ABNORMALLY LOW LEVELS OF PROFIT AND IMPERIL JOBS OF MANY THOUSANDS OF AUSTRALIAN WORKERS." BOB HAWKE, PRESIDENT OF ACTU AND ALP, WHO ONCE WARNED GOA THAT UNEMPLOYMENT OVER TWO PERCENT WOULD BE "UNACCEPTABLE" TO UNION MOVEMENT, DESCRIBED LATEST FIGURES AS DISAPPOINTING BUT EXPECTED, AND EXPRESSED VIEW THAT RECENT GOVERNMENT MEASURES "SHOULD LEAD TO A TURNAROUND IN TWO OR THREE MONTHS" -- BARRING A WORLD DEPRESSION.  
HARROP

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** UNEMPLOYMENT DATA  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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**TAGS:** ECON, EGEN, ELAB, AS  
**To:** STATE  
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**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006